



# THE ST. AUGUSTINE REPORT

Local news in our Nation's Oldest City



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## **Bridge work complete in December**

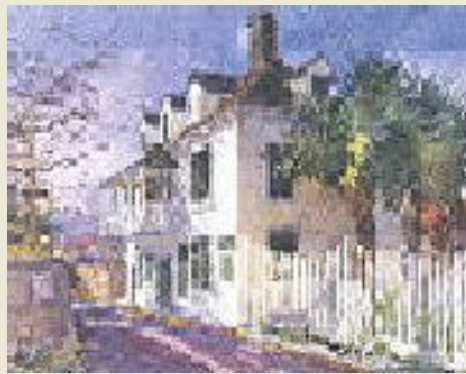
Temporary bridge removal and road work is scheduled for completion by October, and landscaping of the entries 60 days later, Bridge of Lions spokesperson Laurie Sanderson told city commissioners Monday.

She said replacement parts are on their way to correct recent malfunctions, and noted the rehabilitated bridge opening time is slower - not in the span opening but rather the historically accurate swinging gates. Opening time is 4 ½ minutes, she said. Commissioners urged that a dedicated right turn lane entering downtown from the west side of the bridge be marked as soon as possible.

In other action, Commissioner Leanna Freeman failed to get a second on her motion for a resolution against expansion of offshore oil drilling, her colleagues agreeing that the issue has no direct local impact.

Commissioners reappointed former Mayor Len Weeks and Fred Halback to the Historical Architectural Review Board, and named Old Town Trolleys Manager Dave Chatterton to the Code Enforcement Board, Jerry Dixon to the Planning and Zoning Board, and Joe Rubino to the Citizens Advisory Committee for the North Florida Transportation Planning Organization.

And a proposed ordinance to set a 30-day limit on temporary uses by exception in commercial medium zones was advanced to a second public hearing



## ***Groundwork for our 450th***

City officials have reached out from St. Augustine to Stetson University in Deland, our sister city Aviles, Spain, and the Secretary of the Interior's office in Washington DC, laying the groundwork for our 2013-2015 commemoration period.

450th Executive Director Dana Ste. Claire updated commissioners Monday on progress in plans for our commemoration.

In February, the city hosted an official delegation from Avilés, discussing intercity development of plans. In early March, Mayor Joe Boles, 450th Executive Director Dana Ste. Claire, Chief Operations Officer John Regan, and former Department of the Interior official Bill Leary met with US Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar in Washington, D. C. to formally present the 450th Commemoration concept and plan.

While there, the city team conferred with Ray Rivera, Director of External and Government Relations for the Department of the Interior. Rivera is overseeing the planning and implementation of a National Museum for the American Latino, and we want to ensure a place for St. Augustine in the museum.

## ***Girl Scouts revisit 18th century life***

The Girl Scouts of Gateway Council will take over our Ximenez-Fatio House Museum at 20 Aviles Street March 27 to carry out the daily chores and roles of the boarding house era in the mid-18th century.

It's a collaboration with the National Society of The Colonial Dames of America in The State of Florida, owners of the historic property.

In keeping with modern regulations, the young historic interpreters will be at their labors only from 9 to 4 p.m.

Regular museum fees will apply for guided tours.

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Previous Issues

Another city team, Vice Mayor Errol Jones, Regional Steering Committee Member Charles Ellis, 450 Program Coordinator Jamie Alvarez, and Ste. Claire, visited Stetson University to discuss with Dr. Patrick Coggins, Professor of its Multicultural Education Institute, the Commemoration and *First America* program series.

That series has two remaining programs, *Palaces in Paradise: Flagler's Age of Opulence*, April 13 and *Road to Freedom; African-Americans in Florida*, May 18. Both programs begin at 7 p.m. at Flagler College Auditorium.

The complete story is on our city [website](#).



From left, Regan, Ste. Claire, Salazar, Boles, and Leary

## ***The shape of things to come***



Visitor Center bus lot, pavilion filled up

Cars lined up to cross our reopened bridge, buses and RVs filling the bus lot, cars queued up entering our parking facility, school groups filling our Visitor Center promenade to eat their lunch on a day's visit - just a sampling of what's to come as we make plans to tell the world where we are.

Commemoration Executive Director Dana Ste. Claire's earliest words of caution:

"Infrastructure is critical to the success of the 450th Commemoration. You can host the best event in the world, but if you don't have enough parking spaces and bathrooms, our guests will go away unhappy ... or never come at all."

Anticipating crowds during the 2005 Super Bowl in Jacksonville, City Chief Operations Officer John Regan's team was scouting out park and shuttle locations. That research will come in handy.

Many 450 Commemoration volunteers signed up for the flashier Signature Events, History, and Archaeology committees, but it's likely to be the Infrastructure

Committee that will be the crux of St. Augustine's 450th Anniversary.

## ***History three centuries later***

Scores of visitors and residents traveled back to 1672 Saturday to witness a knighting ceremony by Spain's royal family at the start of construction of our Castillo de San Marcos.

Carrying out the traditional knighting at Isabella Garden on St. George Street were Queen Regent Mariana (Teresa Tezack), Princess Margarita Teresa (Katie Raulerson), and the young King Carlos (Matthew Wood) - all native St. Augustinians tracing their roots to our First Spanish Period.

Gaining knighthood for service to our nation was Sgt. Bryan J. Tuten, who lost his life in December 2007 in Iraq, and for his service to our regional community, First Coast News' Ken Amaro.



**Knighting drew a crowd**

## ***History's Highlights***

### ***Helping our visitors through our Castillo***

One in a series of historic features as we prepare for our commemorations, drawn from research by George Gardner

Current restoration work at our landmark Castillo de San Marcos prompts some facts of its history, drawn from the Castillo [website](#).

- *Started by the Spanish in 1672, the Castillo de San Marcos is the oldest masonry fort in North America.*



- *The Castillo cost Spain over a quarter of a million pesos to build, the equivalent of \$30-\$35 million today.*
- *The Castillo was originally covered in bright white plaster called Argamasa, a mix of lime, sand and water.*
- *The trim work and sentry towers were covered with red plaster, made by adding brickdust. Red & white were the royal colors of Spain in the first colonial period.*
- *The tallest tower, on the San Carlos Bastion in the northeast corner, was the bell tower, used to give the alarm in the event of an enemy sighting.*
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*The Castillo was known as Fort Marion from 1821 through 1942. Its name had been changed to honor America's famous Revolutionary War hero, Francis Marion. It regained its original name during WWII.*

- *The Castillo was used for military purposes during WWII. The Coast Guard utilized the fort for training exercises and ceremonies throughout the war years.*

**The St. Augustine Report** is published by the Department of Public Affairs of the City of St. Augustine each Tuesday and on Fridays previewing City Commission meetings. The Report is written and distributed by George Gardner, former St. Augustine Mayor (2002-2006) and Commissioner (2006-2008) and a longtime newspaper reporter and editor. Contact The Report at [gardner@aug.com](mailto:gardner@aug.com)

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